

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. WENSTRUP. Madam Speaker, due to a meeting at the White House, I was unable to vote during the following roll calls on December 21, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 483; YEA on Roll Call No. 484; YEA on Roll Call No. 485; YEA on Roll Call No. 486; YEA on Roll Call No. 487; YEA on Roll Call No. 488; YEA on Roll Call No. 489; YEA on Roll Call No. 490; YEA on Roll Call No. 491; YEA on Roll Call No. 492; YEA on Roll Call No. 493; YEA on Roll Call No. 494; YEA on Roll Call No. 495; YEA on Roll Call No. 496; YEA on Roll Call No. 497; and YEA on Roll Call No. 498.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I reintroduced the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act. I want to thank my colleagues, Representatives JERRY MCNERNEY, MARK DESAULNIER, MIKE THOMPSON, and DORIS MATSUI from California, for their support as original cosponsors.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is central to California life and perhaps the most productive and ecologically important watershed in the United States. Designating the Delta as a new Natural Heritage Area would unlock needed federal funding to conserve the cultural heritage and natural character of this iconic working landscape.

Specifically, our bill would authorize \$10 million to provide federal matching grants to local governments, historical societies, and non-profit organizations throughout the Delta. This grant funding, administered by the National Park Service, would be available for 15 years to support community-based cultural and historical preservation and environmental conservation projects.

California's Delta Protection Commission would be responsible for coordinating the locally developed management plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, once established. Importantly, National Heritage Area designations do not impact water rights, landownership, or hunting and fishing within the designated Heritage Area. As confirmed by the National Park Service, which administers the program, National Heritage Area designations do not affect individual property rights nor do they restrict local land use decisions.

Last year, for the first time in 5 years, the Natural Resources Committee reported out bi-

partisan bills to establish new National Heritage Areas. Now under the new Democratic majority and the leadership of Chairman RAÚL M. GRIJALVA (D-AZ), I hope that the Committee will take up our Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act.

Again, I thank my original cosponsors from the California delegation for their support. Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to join us in cosponsoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act.

CONGRATULATING COACH CHRIS METZGER OF PINECREST HIGH SCHOOL U.S. CELLULAR 2018 MOST VALUABLE COACH

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chris Metzger, the 2018 U.S. Cellular Most Valuable Coach from Pinecrest High School in North Carolina's Eighth Congressional District.

Chris has served as the head football coach for the last 11 years and has had a tremendous impact on the football program and community. Pinecrest High School and the football program are pillars in the community that borders Fort Bragg. When he started, the program was struggling to compete and most students were not academically eligible to play. Today, the team has 84 wins and his players are successful on and off the field.

Coach Metzger is a man of high character and sees the positive in people. He has instilled a sense of pride in his players and pushed them to be men of perseverance, hard work, and determination. He has encouraged them to recognize their blessings and give back to the community.

U.S. Cellular awarded Coach Metzger and Pinecrest High School with a \$50,000 school grant and a Samsung technology package for the school. Coach Metzger was nominated by people in the community and chosen by a panel of judges including Green Bay Packers wide receiver Randall Cobb and WNBA All-Star Maya Moore.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Coach Chris Metzger on receiving the 2018 U.S. Cellular Most Valuable Coach Award.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE BEAR LAKE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL IN MONTPELIER, IDAHO

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call attention to an outstanding rural hos-

pital in Southeast Idaho. The hospital I am referring to is the Bear Lake Memorial Hospital. This hospital was honored with two prestigious awards in 2018 by the National Rural Health Association. They were awarded Top 20 honors as a Critical Access Hospital and for Best Practices in Quality among rural hospitals.

Bear Lake Memorial Hospital is located in Montpelier, Idaho, in the Southeast corner of Idaho. Montpelier is the biggest town in Bear Lake County. It is a small town with a population of less than 3,000, yet manages to provide some of the best rural healthcare in our nation.

The National Rural Health Association compared Bear Lake Memorial Hospital with over 1300 other critical access hospitals. Bear Lake Memorial Hospital scored in the 99.6th percentile overall, making them one of the Top 20 Critical Access Hospitals in the country.

Bear Lake Memorial Hospital was also awarded Top 20 Best Practices in Quality among the 1300 rural hospitals surveyed. This award is based on a hospital's exceptional performance across five categories of Hospital Compare Process of Care measures. Bear Lake Memorial Hospital is being recognized by National Rural Health Association for the outstanding quality of service and care they deliver to their patients and community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I was absent January 8, 2019. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Roll No. 13—H.R. 269—On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill: Yea;

Roll No. 14—H.R. 251—On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill: Yea; and

Roll No. 15—JOURNAL—On approving the journal: Yea.

RECOGNIZING SUPERVISOR MARION ASHLEY FOR HIS YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Supervisor Marion Ashley on his retirement after more than twenty-five years of serving in elected office.

Since 2002, Supervisor Ashley has been a tireless advocate for Riverside County's Fifth District, bringing his energy, leadership, and enthusiasm to the cause of serving his constituents. As we have worked together over the years, I've known Supervisor Ashley to be a man of integrity and compassion, always

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

ready to put the interests of others before his own.

Supervisor Ashley grew up in Riverside County, and like me, has had the privilege of returning home to serve the community that helped raise him. To see his positive impact on towns like Banning, Beaumont, and Calimesa, you only need to look around. You'll see medical centers, public parks, wildlife conservation areas, and fire stations that exist thanks to his advocacy.

During his decades of public service, Supervisor Ashley has demonstrated his strong commitment to positioning Riverside County as a leader in environmental conservation and renewable energy. He has helped Riverside County protect our Desert habitats and wildlife and become a national leader in wind and solar energy. He has personally donated hundreds of acres of land in pursuit of those goals.

Throughout his tenure, Supervisor Ashley has shown a willingness to work on a bipartisan basis. He has welcomed innovative ideas and treated opponents and allies with respect.

In retirement, I hope Supervisor Ashley will enjoy spending more time with Mary, his wife of more than sixty years, and their six children, 19 grandchildren, and 9 great-grandchildren. On behalf of communities across Riverside County, it is my honor to congratulate Supervisor Ashley on a well-earned retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. LaMALFA. Madam Speaker, due to flight issues, I was not able to get back to Washington DC in time for votes on January 8, 2019.

Had I been present, I would have voted Nay on Roll Call No. 013 (H.R. 269), Yea on Roll Call No. 014 (H.R. 251), and Nay on Roll Call No. 15.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF VICENTE "BEN" GUMATAOTAO

HON. MICHAEL F.Q. SAN NICOLAS

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Vicente "Ben" Diaz Gumataotao. "Mayor Ben," as he was widely known as, was steadfast in his dedication to serving the people of Guam and his country. In his 91 years of life, Mayor Ben achieved significant milestones that not only inspired generations but opened doors for those who came after him.

Mayor Ben was born on November 30, 1927 to the late Josefina Diaz and the late Leon Diaz Gumataotao. The third child of twelve children, Mayor Ben and his family resided in the pre-World War II village of Sumay. Mayor Ben and his family lived through the traumatic events during the Japanese Occupation of Guam during World War II. In one instance, his family was forced to march to the

Manenggon Hills concentration camp where he witnessed the atrocities executed by the Japanese soldiers.

Grateful for the United States military's return to the island and overthrow of the Japanese Imperial government's control over Guam, Mayor Ben served over twenty-eight years in the United States Navy where he completed Mess Management School and instructed fellow stewards. He retired at the highest enlisted rank in the United States Navy, the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9).

After his service to his country, Mayor Ben began his service to the people of Guam working for various senators in the Guam Legislature and later for former Congressman Vicente C. Blaz during the 101st and 102nd United States Congress.

He answered the call of his fellow residents and successfully was elected Mayor of the village of Piti. Significant improvements throughout the village continue to be seen and felt due to Mayor Ben's unwavering leadership during his tenure as Mayor. In his lifetime, his advocacy and dedication to public service was appreciated through the various civic and religious organizations he was actively engaged in throughout the island of Guam.

I am deeply saddened by the passing of Mayor Vicente "Ben" Diaz Gumataotao, and I join the people of Guam in celebrating his life and the legacy he left. A dedicated public servant, he worked to improve the quality of life in his village of Piti and in the wider community in Guam during his lifetime. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, loved ones, and friends. Mayor Ben will be deeply missed, and his memory will live on in the hearts of the people of Guam.

HONORING JESSE HERNANDEZ

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mr. Jesse Hernandez, a close member of our Phoenix community, devoted to his family and spiritual fellowship, and a long-time political activist in Arizona. Jesse not only served as a member of my district staff, serving as Director of Outreach, but he also devoted himself to the Arizona Latino Republican Association, where he served as Chairman and Executive Director. His hard work and commitment to his community truly helped make a difference in the lives of his fellow Arizonans. He served his country proudly in the United States Marine Corps, and we are forever grateful for his sacrifice and service to our nation.

Jesse had great love for his family and always supported everyone in their personal journeys to grow and learn. He was a role model and inspiration to his family: Margaret, James, Jessica, and Elvia, as well as his grandchildren. To all who knew Jesse, we shall continue to cherish the memories of his wit, laughter, love of family, friends and faith, and his commitment to the Republican Party.

Jesse served unselfishly for the betterment of others. May we continue to honor his memory through our passion and service to our communities.

HONORING L&F DISTRIBUTORS

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize L&F Distributors and all of its diligent employees. This year, L&F Distributors celebrates 40 years of successfully serving South Texans premium beverages, and I could not be happier to have such talented entrepreneurs in my district.

Purchased in 1978 by Joe LaMantia Jr., this family business started with only a handful of employees and one location in McAllen, Texas. Over four decades later, this third-generation family owned company has taken Texas by storm with locations across 35 counties in Texas and now Southern New Mexico. It is truly an honor to represent such a prestigious example of how impactful local businesses are in our economies. I look forward to watching them continue to grow in Texas and beyond.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to represent the hard-working individuals of L&F Distributors. Their success is a shining example of what the 15th District of Texas has to offer.

THE PASSING OF LORETTA JONES

HON. KAREN BASS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Ms. BASS. Madam Speaker, I would like to honor the life and memory of a pioneer in the field of health policy, my long-time friend, colleague and fellow organizer, Dr. Loretta Jones, who passed away on November 22.

She was a founding member of the Community Coalition for substance abuse Prevention and Treatment. In fact, she was the first staff person hired and developed the Coalition's Prevention Network. That network brought together social service providers from South LA to address substance abuse in the community.

Loretta had a towering passion for justice and a caregiver's attention to detail. She founded Healthy African American Families (HAAF) in the wake of the 1992 Los Angeles uprising to engage universities, think tanks, and community members together to seek solutions to longstanding health problems, including the scourge of pre-term births in the African American community. For this work she received two honorary doctorates and, last year, she received the UCLA Medal, the university's highest honor, for her career of working to address inequalities in health and health outcomes.

She is best known for co-developing methods that give underserved communities a greater role in planning and implementing academic research. Community-Partnered Participatory Research (CPPR) calls for transparency, accountability and equal power-sharing between academics and communities. In 2007, with UCLA professor Kenneth Wells, she published the CCPR model in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

In doing so, she demonstrated another tenet of CPPR—that community members co-author research publications alongside academics.

Loretta had that rare ability to serve as a bridge between the worlds of policy and research, and the everyday lives of the people she cared about most. She mentored hundreds of physicians, nurses, public health practitioners, social scientists and community members to do the same. Those people went on to become tenured faculty members at medical schools, state officials and senior advisers in Congress and the White House.

A native of Massachusetts, she earned a BA in psychology in 1963 and Master's degree in criminal justice in 1972, both from Northeastern University in Boston. She had been a community faculty member at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science since 2010. A former foster youth herself, she fostered 20 children in addition to raising her daughter. She made a real difference in the world during her 77 years.

Loretta always insisted that "Everyone deserves the right to live, everyone deserves good health care, and we are all responsible for making it happen." I mourn her passing with all of those who loved her. I am grateful for her compassion, her dedication, and the work to which she dedicated her life: to empower families to lead truly healthy lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Ms. FRANKEL. Madam Speaker, on roll call votes 13, 14 and 15, I was not present because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on all three.

MEGAN O'GRADY—HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT FROM CAPE CORAL HONORS FALLEN POLICE OFFICERS

HON. FRANCIS ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank Megan O'Grady, a high school student from Cape Coral and founder of Blue Line Bears, for the work she has done to honor fallen police officers.

Through her non-profit organization, Blue Line Bears, Megan makes teddy bears using the uniforms of fallen police officers and delivers them to the officers' families. The daughter of a police officer, Megan was inspired to do something for the families of law enforcement in the wake of the murder of 5 police officers in Dallas.

Megan is especially grateful for the opportunity to make the bears for children and to provide them with tangible mementos of their loved ones. Since she started two years ago, Megan has made 454 bears for families in 36 states.

I am grateful for Megan and her commitment to honor police officers and I look forward to seeing what the future holds for Blue Line Bears.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, on Monday, January 8, 2019, I was unavoidably detained attending to representational duties in my congressional district and was not present for Roll Call Votes 13, 14, and 15. Had I been present I would have voted as follows:

On Roll Call 13, I would have voted AYE on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 269, Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2019.

On Roll Call 14, I would have voted AYE on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 4406, H.R. 251, Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program Extension Act.

On Roll Call 15, I would have voted AYE on Motion to Approve the Journal.

CONGRATULATING CRAIG W. FLOYD ON HIS RETIREMENT AS CEO OF THE NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS MEMORIAL FUND

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Craig W. Floyd, who retired on December 31, 2018 as the CEO of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund after over 30 years of distinguished service.

Mr. Floyd has been a strong law enforcement advocate for over 40 years, beginning with the 10 years he served as Legislative Assistant for my late friend and decorated NYPD legend, Congressman Mario Biaggi. Mr. Floyd helped form the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund with Biaggi, serving as its CEO from the outset.

Under Mr. Floyd's leadership the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund has gone above and beyond in its mission of telling the story of American law enforcement. Mr. Floyd oversaw the construction of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, which was dedicated in 1991. This monument contains the names of over 21,000 fallen law enforcement officers dating back to the first documented line of duty death in 1791. Today, the Memorial Fund maintains the world's most comprehensive database of police officers killed in the line of duty.

During his tenure Mr. Floyd has also overseen the enactment of a federal law authorizing all American flags to be flown at half-staff on "Peace Officers Memorial Day"; enactment of a federal law authorizing 500,000 commemorative silver dollars to be issued by the U.S. Mint honoring the service and sacrifice of America's law enforcement officers and their families; publication of the book, *To Serve and Protect: A Tribute to American Law Enforcement*; 30 annual candlelight vigils honoring fallen police officers during the Memorial Fund's signature event, National Police Week, which attract a crowd of 30,000; and the open-

ing of the National Law Enforcement Museum on October 13, 2018.

As the son of an NYPD officer, I commend Mr. Floyd on his outstanding contributions to members of the law enforcement community and thank him on behalf of myself and all those who are undoubtedly better off because of his efforts. I wish Mr. Floyd all the best in his retirement.

HONORING LT. COL. HAROLD "HAL" FRITZ ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS MEDAL OF HONOR

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lieutenant Colonel Harold "Hal" Fritz on the 50th Anniversary of receiving his Medal of Honor. Lt. Col. Fritz is one of 74 living Medal of Honor recipients.

A resident of Peoria, Illinois for the past 25 years, Lt. Col. Fritz honorably served our nation as a platoon leader in the Vietnam War. During his time as a Captain, Lt. Col. Fritz acted with great courage to receive the Medal of Honor. Captain Fritz was leading his fellow soldiers on a convoy when they were suddenly ambushed, and as a result, surrounded by the enemy. After receiving heavy fire, Captain Fritz was wounded, but instead of treating himself, he thought of those fighting alongside him. Captain Fritz responded swiftly by returning fire, directing the men with him, and treating their wounds. These extraordinary actions taken by Captain Fritz led him and his men away from danger. Lt. Col. Fritz showed immense bravery, and I commend him on his actions during the Vietnam War. The Medal of Honor is a great distinction and it is fitting that Lt. Col. Fritz actions are recognized in this way.

It is because of dedicated and selfless leaders such as Lt. Col. Harold "Hal" Fritz that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally honor Lt. Col. Hal Fritz on the 50th Anniversary of his receipt of the Medal of Honor.

HONORING FELIPE HUERTA

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Madam Speaker, I stand today to honor the life of Felipe Huerta, Jr. I was deeply saddened to hear that Felipe passed away on Sunday, December 16 2018.

Felipe served his community as an EMS medic for three and a half years. He also served his country as a Marine, having been deployed twice to Afghanistan. He was awarded the Purple Heart for the sacrifices he made protecting our great nation.

Everything we hold dear as a community, state, and country is owed to the brave sacrifice of service members like Mr. Huerta. Felipe was a true patriot and hero who will always be remembered for his dedication to

serving others. I know that Felipe's legacy will inspire future generations to honorably serve our fellow man.

Madam Speaker, last month our country lost a veteran, and one of its kindest individuals. His family will be in my thoughts and prayers. It is a privilege to represent individuals like Felipe Huerta, Jr. and his family.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
GENNARO (JERRY) CIANCIOTTA

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the service and sacrifice of Gennaro (Jerry) Cianciotta who was born on January 13, 1919, grew up in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn and now resides in Ronkonkoma, New York.

Jerry enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps during the summer of 1940 and was sent to Fort Benning in Georgia where he was assigned to the Fifteenth Air Corps Group—68th Materiel. Upon completion of Basic Training, Jerry was transferred to Africa where he encountered enemy fire and bombings by the German military. Tasked with the treacherous job of refueling aircrafts, he achieved the rank of Corporal and was awarded multiple awards for his service, including a Good Conduct medal.

Jerry was then sent to England, where the enemy aggression continued. "I was really lucky," Jerry stated in reference to surviving the bombs and fire he encountered. After serving in England for a year, Jerry, who was fluent in Italian, was sent to Italy, where he remained until just prior to the end of World War II. Having returned home on leave to get married at the conclusion of the war, Jerry returned to Fort Dix, New Jersey, where he was honorably discharged.

For his service and sacrifice, our Nation will always be indebted to Buck Sergeant Gennaro (Jerry) Cianciotta, and his bravery and selflessness, then and now, continues to inspire us all.

ADOPTING THE RULES OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FOR THE 116TH CONGRESS

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 3, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in 2010, after a century of trying, under the leadership of Speaker NANCY PELOSI and our nation's 44th President, Barack Obama, the Affordable Care Act became the law of the land.

Before the Affordable Care Act, untold millions of Americans lived with the reality that they did not have access to Affordable Care Act.

Before the passage of the Affordable Care Act, 17.1 percent of Americans lacked health insurance; today nearly nine of ten (89.1 percent) are insured, which is the highest rate since Gallup began tracking insurance coverage in 2008.

Because of the Affordable Healthcare Act: insurance companies are banned from discriminating against anyone, including 17 million children, with a preexisting condition, or charging higher rates based on gender or health status; 6.6 million young-adults up to age 26 can stay on their parents' health insurance plans; 100 million Americans no longer have annual or life-time limits on healthcare coverage; 6.3 million seniors in the "donut hole" have saved \$6.1 billion on their prescription drugs; 3.2 million seniors now get free annual wellness visits under Medicare, and 360,000 Small Businesses are using the Health Care Tax Credit to help them provide health insurance to their workers; Pregnancy is no longer a pre-existing condition and women can no longer be charged a higher rate just because they are women.

This bill was fiercely debated for over a year. It passed both houses of Congress and was signed by President Obama on March 23, 2010.

The bill did many things—it improved access to quality care; made care more affordable, and improved the quality of the law.

It also advanced several pillars that will undoubtedly advance healthcare in America.

For example, the Affordable Care Act:

Lowers the uninsured rate. Gallup recently estimated that the uninsured rate in Texas in 2015 was 22.3 percent, down from 27.0 percent in 2013. In 2017, the number was at 16 percent.

Prohibits coverage denials and reduced benefits, protecting as many as 10,694,840 Texans who have some type of pre-existing health condition, including 1,632,475 children.

Eliminates lifetime and annual limits on insurance coverage and establishes annual limits on out-of-pocket spending on essential health benefits, benefiting 7,536,000 people in Texas, including 2,771,000 women and 2,094,000 children.

Allows states to expand Medicaid to all non-eligible adults with incomes under 133 percent of the federal poverty level. If Texas expands Medicaid, an additional 1,107,000 uninsured people would gain coverage.

Establishes a system of state and federal Health Insurance Exchanges, or Marketplaces, to make it easier for individuals and small-business employees to purchase health plans at affordable prices. During the open enrollment period for 2016 coverage, 1,306,208 people in Texas selected a plan through the Marketplace, including approximately 626,980 new consumers and 378,800 young adults. In Texas, 78 percent of Marketplace consumers could have selected a plan for \$100 per month or less after tax credits for 2016 coverage.

Created a temporary high-risk pool program to cover uninsured people with pre-existing conditions prior to 2014 reforms, which helped 10,336 people in Texas.

And, the ACA creates health plan disclosure requirements and simple, standardized summaries so 12,620,500 people in Texas can better understand coverage information and compare benefits.

With respect to the affordability of care, the ACA made marked improvements in this sphere, too. For example, the ACA:

Creates a tax credit that, during the most recent open enrollment period, has helped 1,093,573 Marketplace enrollees in Texas who otherwise might not be able to afford it sign up for health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace.

Requires health insurers to provide consumers with rebates if the amount they spend on health benefits and quality of care, as opposed to advertising and marketing, is too low. Last year, 96,024 consumers in Texas received \$14,119,897 in rebates. Since this requirement was put in place in 2011 more than \$2.4 billion in total refunds have been paid to consumers nationwide through 2014.

Eliminates out-of-pocket costs for preventive services like immunizations, certain cancer screenings, contraception, reproductive counseling, obesity screening, and behavioral assessments for children. This coverage is guaranteed for 10,278,005 people in Texas, including 4,029,215 women.

Eliminates out-of-pocket costs for 2,556,874 Medicare beneficiaries in Texas for preventive services like cancer screenings, bone-mass measurements, annual physicals, and smoking cessation.

Phases out the "donut hole" coverage gap for 346,750 Medicare prescription drug beneficiaries in Texas, who have saved an average of \$1,057 per beneficiary.

Creates Accountable Care Organizations consisting of doctors and other health-care providers who come together to provide coordinated, high-quality care at lower costs to 564,161 Medicare beneficiaries in Texas.

Phases out overpayments through the Medicare Advantage system, while requiring Medicare Advantage plans to spend at least 85 percent of Medicare revenue on patient care. Since 2009, Medicare Advantage enrollment has grown by 704,407 to 1,230,523 in Texas while premiums have dropped by 10 percent nationwide.

And, the ACA also improved quality of care, too. For example, the ACA:

Provides incentives to hospitals in Medicare to reduce hospital-acquired infections and avoidable readmissions. Creates a collaborative health-safety learning network, the Partnership for Patients, which includes 121 hospitals in Texas, to promote best quality practices. Avoidable readmissions have fallen since 2010, saving 87,000 lives and \$20 billion in health care costs, and the rate of one common deadly hospital acquired infection, central-line blood stream infections, fell by 50 percent from 2008 to 2014 nationwide.

Yet, for some reason, Republicans filed countless legal challenges to this law.

On two separate occasions, the United States Supreme Court has ruled on the validity of the Affordable Care Act.

In 2012, it pushed back on a challenge arguing that the ACA is unconstitutional.

In 2015, the Supreme Court pushed back on a statutory challenge to the ACA.

In both instances, the United States Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act and did so with a Supreme Court Justice appointed by a Republican President.

Following these two endorsements of the law by the Supreme Court, the law appeared safe.

Until last month, when a sole federal district judge in Texas invalidated the Affordable Care Act based on perverse logic.

The genesis of this entire litigation is has been problematic.

Texas v. United States as an action filed in Texas by our state attorney general, who is currently under criminal indictment.

The matter was then joined by state attorneys general, who now pledge to fight the House's vigorous appeal of this matter.

That judge's ruling indicated that when Republicans in Congress, as part of the GOP tax scam, repealed the individual mandate of the Affordable Care Act—that part of the law that required all to have proof of health insurance or pay a penalty—they in effect invalidated the whole law, rendering it unconstitutional.

This is absurd. First, it ignores the fact that the Affordable Care Act has twice been upheld by the Supreme Court.

Second, despite the fact that the Supreme Court has twice ruled on the ACA, it has never endorsed the perverse reasoning underlying this district court's ruling.

To be clear, in *NFIB v. Sebellius*, 567 U.S. 519 (2012), the Supreme Court held that the penalty for failing to buy health insurance was a constitutional exercise of the Congress's tax and spending power, not that it must be, or that the provision of the law at issue from the tax is otherwise unconstitutional in the absence of it.

It follows that a district court invalidating a law as unconstitutional based on this provision, without giving to the Congress the opportunity to fix the infirmity, smacks of the type of judicial activism which the American political right often laments, especially when the Supreme Court has twice ruled on the law's constitutionality.

The ruling was met by cheers and applause by the President and Congressional Republicans, whose singular policy mission over the last eight years has been to end the Affordable Care Act, and in the process take away the health care that millions of individuals receive through it.

Let me first state that the Affordable Care Act, which House Republicans derisively call Obamacare, is still the law of the land.

The ruling issued by a federal district court judge in the Northern District of Texas is wrong on the facts, the law, and will not stand.

Unfortunately, the present administration occupying the White House is a sworn opponent of the Affordable Care Act, and the provisions it contains, like protecting people with pre-existing conditions and ensuring that young adults can stay on their parents' healthcare plans until Age 26.

That is why, with respect to *Texas v. United States*, Democrats offer H. Res. 6, which would: permit the Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives, in consultation with the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group, to intervene, otherwise appear, or take any other steps in any other cases involving the Patient

Protection and Affordable Care Act, to protect the institutional interests of the House and to defend such act and the amendments made by such Act to other provisions of law, and any amendments to such provisions, including the provisions ensuring affordable health coverage for those with preexisting conditions.

The title directs the Office of General Counsel of the House of Representatives to represent the House in any such litigation and authorizes the Office of General Counsel to employ the services of outside counsel, including pro bono counsel, or other outside experts.

This is not an unprecedented action and in fact is contemplated by federal authority.

Rule 24 Federal Rules of Civil Procedure prescribe permissive intervention in a federal action by a government entity to vindicate a real interest.

The need to protect the healthcare interests of tens of millions of Americans—which was made possible, in part, by an act of this body, is a real interest as contemplated by Rule 24.

And this approach has bipartisan history.

As recently as 2011, when the Obama Administration refused to uphold the validity of the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act, which I did not support, House Republicans invoked Title III to hire outside counsel in defense of an ultimately unconstitutional bill—the first time the Supreme Court had ever ruled on the law's validity.

In contrast, in this case, the Affordable Care Act has withstood many legal challenges by the Supreme Court and has emerged from them intact.

The need to intervene in this case is informed by the millions of Americans whose peace of mind about their healthcare security is in doubt, including the countless Texans in my home state.

I urge my colleagues to approve H. Res. 6, and authorize intervention in this case, to vindicate the healthcare interests of tens of millions.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees

to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, January 10, 2019 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JANUARY 15

9:30 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of William Pelham Barr, of Virginia, to be Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SH-216

JANUARY 16

9:30 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To continue hearings to examine the nomination of William Pelham Barr, of Virginia, to be Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SH-216

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Organizational business meeting to consider committee rules for the 116th Congress.

SD-106

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Andrew Wheeler, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

SD-406

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine the future of nuclear power, focusing on advanced reactors.

SD-138